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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA: POLITICAL NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 20-27

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¶1. (SBU) This was written in partnership with the Open Source Center's Pretoria Bureau. The newsletter is open to contributions from officers in the Embassy or in the Consulates who wish to highlight political trends. Contact Madeline Seidenstricker for more information, or to make contributions. The newsletter also is available on the Political Section's blog, "A View from South Africa," found on intelink.gov.

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Domestic News  
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Home Affairs works on new migration policy

¶2. Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma announced that her department is working on developing a new migration policy to help government distinguish between economic migrants and asylum-seekers. Dlamini-Zuma, consulting various stakeholders, met with COSATU in Johannesburg. Once the process of consultation is completed, the Minister will present the proposals to both Cabinet and Parliament for approval and implementation. This takes place against the background of the approval granted by Cabinet for the Minister to develop a new migration policy," according to a statement issued by the department. November, 25, 2009, BuaneWS

SAPS to be assisted by specialized units

¶3. Minister of Police Nathi Mthethwa announced that the South African Police Service (SAPS) will be deploying members of specialized tactical teams to provide operational support at grass roots level. According to Mthethwa, the deployment of these units is part of the SAPS turnaround strategy adopted after the release of crime statistics in October, and is intended to enhance techniques aimed at fighting crime. Tactical teams will be deployed in some business areas, particularly in informal and small businesses, and residential areas where house robberies are taking place. Crime experts have welcomed the deployment of tactical teams to local police stations, calling it "a right move" for government. Analysts have expressed their confidence in this decision but emphasized that it would need strategic coordination to ensure that the units work cooperatively to stamp out criminals. (November, 24, 2009, BuaneWS)

Scopa calls for Balfour's head

¶4. Government's watchdog standing committee on public accounts (Scopa) called on President Jacob Zuma to recall former Prisons Minister Ngconde Balfour from the former Minister's current post as Ambassador to Botswana. Themba Godi, head of Scopa, told reporters that the President must show his seriousness about fighting corruption and deal with Balfour. This comes after the special investigation unit's (SIU) report released in Parliament last week. The SIU's three-year investigation found that alleged corruption to the value of R2,1 million took place in the Correctional Services

Department while Balfour was Minister. ( November,24,2009,Sowetan)

Men called on to respect women

¶15. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu has challenged South African men to lead this year's 16 Days of Activism against Women and Child Abuse campaign. The drive kicked off on Wednesday and will end on December 10. It is primarily focused on generating an increased awareness of the negative impact of violence on women and children. (November, 24, 2009, Eyewitness)

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International News  
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¶16. (U) The South African government expressed its concern at the latest round of Israeli settlement activities in East Jerusalem and registered its condemnation of Israel's approval of 900 new registered its condemnation of Israel's approval of 900 new settlement units in the settlement of Gilo, south of East Jerusalem. South Africa emphasized that the issue of Jerusalem is one of the final status issues that needs to be part of a negotiated solution to the conflict in the Middle East. The South African government called upon the Israeli government to cease settler activities that are reminiscent of apartheid forced removals and resume negotiations immediately. (DIRCO Briefing 24 November 2009)

¶17. (U) The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) together with the "Embassy" of Palestine in South Africa and the Office of the United Nations in South Africa hosted an annual event to celebrate United Nations International Day of Solidarity with the people of Palestine on November 25. The event included a seminar with many panelists from both South Africa and Palestine. (DIRCO Briefing, November 25)

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¶18. (U) President Zuma received King Harald V and Queen Sonja of Norway for a State Visit November 24-26. Zuma was supported by Minister for Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation, Collins Chabane as Acting Minister of International Relations and Cooperation; Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande; Minister of Energy, Ms Dipuo Peters; Minister of Environmental and Water Affairs, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica; Minister of Land Affairs and Rural Development, Minister Gugile Nkwinti; and Minister of Science and Technology; Ms Naledi Pandor. The visit comes within the context of North-South Dialogue and further maintaining the already strong bilateral relationship between South Africa and Norway. President Zuma and King Harald were expected to discuss:

--International Relations and Cooperation- Declaration of Intent on Bilateral Cooperation 2010-2014, including the importance of partnerships in Africa and trilateral cooperation and Climate change

--Education and Science & Technology- Cooperation in higher education and research

--Energy- MOU to be signed by SASOL and Gassnova and the Norwegian involvement in Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)

--Trade and Industry- Cooperation in mutual trade and investments. (DIRCO Briefing, November 24).

GIPS